

## The Achievements Of 'Uthmān Ibn Affan, And The Events Leading To His Martyrdom

Abu Ruqayyah

### Introduction

This article discusses and assess the reign of 'Uthmān ibn Affan (may Allah be pleased with him) and rebuts some of the false allegations made against this illustrious Companion.

Suyuti states that 'Uthmān (may Allah be pleased with him) was born six years after the Prophet. Suyuti quotes Ibn Ishaq stating that that 'Uthmān was one of the first to accept Islam, after Abū Bakr, 'Alī, and Zayd ibn Hārith. He was one of the ten promised Paradise. 146 *ḥadīth* have been narrated from him. He gave 6,000 camels and 50 horses for Tabuk. He married two of the daughters of the Prophet; Rūqayah, and then Umm Kulthūm and was nicknamed *Dhu'n Nūrayn* – the Possessor of two lights. About him the Prophet said: "Should I not feel shy of a man whom the angels are shy". And he (salahu alaihi wa sallam) said about him: "This one will be wrongfully killed".

After his fatal stabbing, 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) chose a panel of six men to decide on his successor from among themselves. The six were: 'Uthmān, 'Alī, Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās, Ṭalhā, Zubayr and Abdur Rahmān bin 'Auf. The latter withdrew from the contest and obtained the agreement of the others to be given authority to choose the Caliph. Ṭalhā was absent from Madina and hence was not party to the decision making process. Three days after the consultative body was convened, Abdur Rahmān bin 'Auf announced that 'Uthmān was to be the Caliph.

### 'Uthmān's achievements as a Caliph.

'Uthmān's reign lasted twelve years, from 644 to 656 C.E (24H – 35H). The first six years of his Khilafa were trouble free. Although the caliphate of 'Uthmān ended tragically, his reign can be considered successful from a number of different angles; military, religious and economic.

One of 'Uthmān's lasting legacy was the territorial expansion of the Muslim Caliphate. The development of a highly efficient navy contributed to this military success. 'Uthmān's first challenge as Caliph was to thwart the Byzantine counter offensives against land conquered in the time of 'Umar. The Byzantine attack was on two fronts; against Alexandria in Egypt which they captured with very little resistance and Syria. 'Amr bin Al 'Ās defeated the Byzantium army as it marched from Alexandria to capture Fustat. He then laid siege to Alexandria and managed to recapture the city.

The Byzantines sent 80,000 men to recapture Syria. They were repelled by a joint Syrian - Iraqi force in which the Byzantine commander was killed. Following the Byzantine defeat, Mu'āwiya, the governor of Syria decided to go on the offensive. Without a naval force, the Syrian and Egyptian coasts were vulnerable to Byzantine attack. Mu'āwiya and Abdullah ibn Sa'd, the governor of Egypt persuaded 'Uthmān to overturn the decision of his predecessor 'Umar, and to give permission for a naval fleet to be built.

In 28H, a fleet of 500 ships was sent to conquer Cyprus. The latter was an important Byzantine naval base. After a fierce battle, Cyprus was occupied, and

the Cypriots agreed to pay the *jizya*. In the same year Anatolia was also captured. Six years after the construction of the first ever Muslim navy, Byzantine naval supremacy in the Mediterranean came to an end in a decisive battle known as the Battle of the Masts. The Byzantine navy of 500 ships was commanded by the Constans II against a Muslim fleet of 200. The naval encounter off the coast of southern Turkey ended in disaster for the Byzantines, and Constans fled to the island of Syracuse where he was killed by the locals.

The Eastern part of the Caliphate expanded significantly under the military leadership of Abdullah bin 'Amir, the governor of Basra. After crushing an internal rebellion in Persia, he led an army to Khurāsān conquering Nīshāpūr, Harat, Merv and Balkh. The fall of Balkh ensured the whole of Khurāsān came under Muslim control. The Muslim army continued eastwards and Kabul was captured. Another Muslim column pushed southwards conquering Makran.

A large part of North Africa was also captured in the early part of 'Uthmān's reign under the leadership of the governor of Egypt; Abdullah bin Sa'd. Tripoli, an important Byzantine stronghold first fell to the Muslim forces, followed by Sabetula, the capital city of the Byzantine governor Gregory. The latter was killed, and the Muslims went further west to capture Tunisa, Morocco and parts of Algeria.

Northwards from Iraq, Armenia and Ādharbayjān were re-captured following a rebellion. The Muslim army pushed further north after defeating the Romans, making their presence felt in the Caucasus regions and capturing a large swathe of land west of the Caspian Sea.

Thus the reign of 'Uthmān witnessed some astonishing military successes. The Islamic empire continued to expand, with the conquest of Cyprus, Anatolia, Khurasān, Afghanistan, Samarkand, Tushkent as well as Libya, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia.

These military victories brought immense wealth to the Caliphate in the form of booty and land tax. For example, the land tax (*kharaj*) from Egypt alone was four million dinar. 'Uthmān retained some, but not all of the economic policies of 'Umar. 'Umar had decreed that conquered land was not to be divided up amongst the army, but would remain with the local population as official state land. The local farmers paid a tax (*fay*) on this land according to the income derived from it. 'Uthmān continued this policy causing consternation among sections of the army.

However 'Uthmān increased the stipends paid to those who had participated in the wars of conquest (*ahl al fay*) by twenty five per cent. 'Uthmān also lifted the restrictions placed by 'Umar on the purchase of land in the conquered territories. Taking advantage of loans from the public treasury, many Companions purchased agricultural land in Iraq and became wealthy landowners. This caused jealousy among some of the local population and this resentment was later exploited by those who wished to challenge the Caliph's authority. 'Uthmān also continued the programme of public works started by his predecessor 'Umar, and had numerous canals dug for agricultural purposes as well as *masjids*, rest houses for travellers and schools.

From the religious angle, 'Uthmān is best remembered for his decision to unite the Muslims on a standard text of the Qur'ān. Zayd ibn Thābit was chosen to lead a committee of four Companions renowned for their scholarship of the Qur'ān, in order to make official copies from the mushaf held by Hafsa, daughter of the late Caliph 'Umar. Seven copies in total were made and were sent to the various regions with an official recitor. With every copy of the Qur'ān, 'Uthmān sent a qari

to teach it. This was to emphasise that the recitation of the Qur'ān had to be learnt orally through a teacher who had an authentic transmission going back to the Prophet (*sallahu alaihi wa sallam*). Recitation could never be solely based on the text. The script itself was in the *Koofee* script without *nuqat* and *tashkeel*. All other manuscripts were destroyed and all new copies were to be made from the official copy, known as the Mushaf 'Uthmān. Another significant religious event in the reign of 'Uthmān was the extension of the Prophet's mosque in 29H.

## **The beginning of the fitnah**

The agitation against 'Uthmān's authority began in Iraq. Sālim ibn Abdullah ibn 'Umar said that the Messenger of Allah said: "Tribulation will come from there" and he pointed towards the East.

One of the central figures in the agitation against and the eventual killing of 'Uthmān was a Yemeni Jew called Abdullah ibn Saba who claimed to profess Islam. His intention was solely to cause disruption amongst the Muslims. Abdullah ibn Saba was able to successfully exploit underlying tensions in the provinces. Some western historians mention that there was tension between the early participants in the battles of conquests, and the later arrivals, particularly in Kūfa and Basra. The former were given handsome financial rewards for their services to Islam and had acquired much wealth, despite the fact that many of them were not from powerful tribes. This was resented by the later-comers, thus causing tension between the two groups.

Ṭabarī states that in Kūfa, 'Uthmān had ordered the execution of several men from nobility of Kūfa for their participation in a murder. The fathers of these men were aggrieved by this, and were looking for an opportunity for revenge. In Egypt, there was discontent with 'Uthmān for replacing 'Amr bin Al 'Ās with Abdullah bin Sa'd, as well as 'Uthmān's decision to assign the latter one fifth of the booty from the North African campaign. In Basra, complaints had been made against the governor, Abū Mūsa al Ash'arī in the time of 'Umar and 'Uthmān acquiesced to their demands. And in Syria, Abū Dharr was expressing his dissatisfaction with, as he saw it, the abandonment of the life of asceticism that was prevalent in the time of the Prophet.

A number of allegations were directed against 'Uthmān. Firstly it was claimed that he gave preference to his family members when appointing governors. Secondly, it was alleged that the governors he appointed were incompetent and thirdly that he ignored their incompetence. "However out of 12 provinces in the Islamic state, only in four; Egypt, Syria, Kūfa and Basra were relatives of 'Uthmān appointed" The foster son of 'Uthmān, Abū Hudhayfa was not given any position of authority by 'Uthmān, much to the annoyance of the latter.

## **Reply to the allegation of nepotism**

Many Muslim and non-Muslim historians accuse 'Uthmān of nepotism. Those who accuse him of this include Taha Hussain in his book 'Othman', S. Khuda Bukhsh in his book 'Contributions to the history of Islamic Civilisation Volume 1' as well as most Shia 'historians'. This allegation was also made by 'Uthmān's adversaries and they used this, along with other allegations to disparage his integrity and to encourage the people to revolt against him.

However all the allegations of nepotism were unfounded. I will discuss the four governors who were related to 'Uthmān; Walīd ibn Uqba, Abdullah ibn Sa'd, Mu'āwiya and Abdullah bin Āmir, to refute the allegation of nepotism.

In 25 AH Walīd ibn Uqba, the foster brother of 'Uthmān replaced Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās as governor of Kūfa after the latter had a dispute with Abdullah ibn Masūd.. In the first five years of his governorship. Walīd was very popular with the local people; he suppressed the revolts in Armenia and Ādharbayjān, and he acquired a large amount of booty. Prior to this, in the khilafate of Abū Bakr, Walīd was entrusted with carrying secret messages of war between Abū Bakr and Khalid bin Walīd. He was then sent as a general to conquer East Jordan. He was also given positions of authority in the time of 'Umar. Hence Walīd had a proven track record as an effective governor and statesman. 'Uthmān stated that: "I did not appoint al-Walīd because he is my brother, I appointed him because he is the son of Umm Hakim al-Bayda, the aunt of the Messenger of Allah, (salahu alaihi wa sallam) Walīd ibn Uqba was later replaced by Sa'īd ibn Al-'Ās in 30AH, after a false allegation of drinking was made against him. The fact that 'Uthmān had him flogged and dismissed as governor, rebuts the argument of those who accuse 'Uthmān of favouring him by appointing him as governor.

In the reign of 'Umar, Egypt was divided into two provinces; Upper and Lower Egypt. Abdullah ibn Sa'd was placed in charge of Upper Egypt, and 'Amr bin Al-'Ās was in charge of Lower Egypt. 'Uthmān reintegrated Egypt into one province, disposing of Amr bin Al-'Ās and placing his foster brother, Abdullah ibn Sa'd in charge of the province. This move was unpopular with some of the Egyptians. 'Amr bin Al-'Ās was a popular military leader, and it was under him that Egypt was conquered. However the claim that the change of governorship was a politically foolish move, motivated only by 'Uthmān's desire to please his relatives does not hold. Firstly the deposed Amr bin Al-'Ās was also a relative of 'Uthmān; his (step) brother in law. Secondly, the revenues from Egypt increased under Abdullah ibn Sa'd governorship showing that his appointment brought financial benefit to the Caliphate. Although the services of Amr bin Al-'Ās had to be called upon to repel the Byzantine attack on Egypt, Abdullah ibn Sa'd was far from being a weak military leader. Under his governorship, most of north Africa was conquered and along with it, a huge amount of spoils. Abdullah bin Sa'd built a strong navy and defeated the Romans in numerous naval battles.

Under 'Uthmān, Syria, Jordan and Palestine were consolidated into a single province, with Mu'āwiyah as its governor. This was not a new appointment; under 'Umar, Mu'āwiyah's authority prior to this covered most but not all of Syria. 'Uthmān extended his authority to include Palestine and Emessa. Syria was of great strategic importance. Unlike the Persians, the Byzantines were far from defeated. The Byzantines were a formidable enemy and for hundreds of years after the conquest of Syria they were still threatening to retake the land they had lost. Syria was on the front line against the Byzantines and needed to be defended from land and sea. Mu'āwiyah defeated the Byzantine navy, conquering their strategically vital naval port of Cyprus, repulsed the Byzantine attack on Syria and led an, albeit unsuccessful attack on Constantinople. By launching annual attacks on the Byzantines, he kept them in a state of unease, and hence protecting the northern border. Mu'āwiyah's twenty year rule over Syria was one of justice. Ibn Taymīyyah said: "The behaviour of Mu'āwiyah with the people was the best behaviour of any ruler". Ibn Abbās said: "I have not seen a man more suited to rulership than Mu'āwiyah...how can 'Uthmān be censured for appointing him when 'Umar appointed him before him, and he was appointed by Abū Bakr before 'Umar". It is a testament to his skill, that there was no dissension in Sham during his rule.

Abū Mūsā Al Ash'arī was the governor of Basra under 'Umar. During this time, the people of Basra made a number of allegations against him. 'Umar thoroughly investigated these complaints and found them to be false. Under 'Uthmān, the Basrans complained again. 'Uthmān replaced him with his cousin Abdullah bin

Āmir, Thus the appointment of his cousin was not arbitrary; it was a response to the requests of the local population. Abdullah bin Āmir was a military genius. Although aged only twenty five when he took his position as governor, within a few years he conquered huge territories in the eastern provinces of Persia reaching as far as Kabul. Hence, the appointment of Abdullah bin Āmir brought huge military and financial gains to the Caliphate and paved the way for further conquests during the Ummayyad period.

The above four examples demonstrate that criticism of 'Uthmān's choice of governors in the four strategic provinces of Kūfa, Egypt, Syria, Basra is baseless when we examine the achievements of these governors. In the main it is the Rafidah Shi'a who propagate these lies, however a number of ignorant Sunni writers blindly follow the Shi'a historians and also propagate these views.

Qādī Abū Bakr Ibn al Arabi states in his book *Defence Against Disaster : the Accurate Position of the Companions after the Prophet's Death*:

"Any one who considers the life of the governors of 'Uthmān and their jihad and their virtues will see that they are at the highest pinnacle of the men in government. He will feel no hesitation in confirming that they were among the architects of the strong basis of the administrative and military glory of Islam"

## **Abdullah ibn Saba spreads fitnah throughout the provinces**

Abdullah ibn Saba settled in Madina to delve into the affairs of the Muslims and to study their weak points. In 33AH he heard that an individual in Basra called Hakam bin Jabalah had been temporarily imprisoned for criminal activities. Ibn Saba travelled to Basra and befriended ibn Jabalah. Together they started a propaganda campaign against the governor and the Caliph. He also started propagating false beliefs such as the divine right of 'Alī to be the Caliph. His display of love for 'Alī was expressed so eloquently that soon a party in support of 'Alī was formed. Differences between Arabs and non Arabs, between *Umayyads* and *Hashimites*, between Bedouins and city dwellers were exploited. In the same year, the governor expelled him from Basra and he left for Kūfa. However he left behind a following on Basra. In Kūfa, Ibn Saba found fertile ground for his activities. Mālik ibn Ashtar was already working against the governor and the Caliph, and they jointly carried out propaganda against the Caliph.

Mālik ibn Ashtar and his co-conspirators were expelled from Kūfa for their anti – government activities. They were detained in Sham by Abdur Rahmān ibn Khalid bin Walīd. Ashtar repented and was sent to Madina to see 'Uthmān. 'Uthmān accepted their repentance and allowed him to return to Kūfa.

After his expulsion from Kūfa, Ibn Saba travelled to Syria, where he tried to win Abū Dharr to his cause. Abū Dharr had a dispute with Mu'āwiyah regarding the *Baytul Māl*, which Ibn Saba tried unsuccessfully to exploit. He left Damascus and travelled to Egypt.

In Egypt, there was already discontent against the governor Abdullah ibn Sa'd. The latter was busy with the campaigns in North Africa and was not able to give the internal problems his immediate concern. In Egypt, Ibn Saba maintained letter contact with his supporters in Basra and Kūfa. A letter writing campaign was started as a result of which countless letters of complaints of alleged atrocities against the governors of Kūfa, Basra and Egypt, (and by implication against 'Uthmān who appointed these governors) were arriving in Madina. In addition, forged letters were sent to these regions in the name of 'Alī, Tālḥa and



Zubair, complaining against 'Uthmān. Many sincere but gullible people were led to belief that the leading Companions in Madina were against 'Uthmān.

In 34 AH, 'Uthmān called a meeting of the governors in Madina after the Hajj to discuss the situation. Mu'āwiya from Syria, Abdullah bin Sa'd from Egypt, Sa'd bin Al-'Ās from Kufah and Abdullah bin Āmir from Basra attended, as did governors of smaller provinces. It was agreed that there was very little substance behind the complaints. However 'Uthmān was reluctant to take punitive action. This was due to his ardent desire not to spill the blood of his fellow Muslims. The view of Sa'd ibn Al-'Ās was that the leaders of the sedition should be punished severely, even executed as this would be the best way to prevent the situation from escalating. However 'Uthmān hoped that by showing kindness and mercy to them, they would see the error of their ways and sincerely repent.

While Sa'd ibn Al-'Ās was still in Madina, Ashtār returned to Kūfa, having repented in front of 'Uthmān for his previous mischief. Arriving at Kūfa, he claimed that the Sa'd ibn Al-'Ās was telling the Caliph to take punitive action against the Kufans. Uproar ensued and a thousand Kufans marched to Madina to see 'Uthmān. Although 'Uthmān managed to pacify them, they were insistent that Sa'd ibn Al-'Ās be deposed and replaced by Abū Mūsā Al Ash'arī. 'Uthmān agreed to this.

## **The Complaints against 'Uthmān.**

The influx of complaints from the provinces led some Companions to approach 'Uthmān. He agreed to send reliable individuals to the provinces to investigate and report back. Muḥammad bin Maslamah was sent to Kūfa, Usama bin Zayd to Basrah and Ibn 'Umar to Syria. They reported back stating that the allegations against the governors were unfounded. After the Hajj season, 'Uthmān agreed to hear any complaints from the people

A number of objections were raised. Qādī Abū Bakr Ibn al Arabi in his book *Al Awaasim bil Qawaasim* mentions a number of complaints made against 'Uthmān, and a rebuttal of these complaints.

1) It was alleged that 'Uthmān gave lavish gifts to his relatives. 'Uthmān replied that this was so, however it was from his personal wealth and not the Treasury

2) 'Uthmān burnt copies of the Qur'ān. 'Alī ibn Tālib said: 'If I were in charge when Uthmaan had been, I would have done the same as he did'. He also said: "By Allah, he only burnt them with permission from the assembly of the Companions".

3) Uthmān did not attend *Badr* and was defeated on the day of *Uhud*. He was not at the covenant of *Ridwān at Hdaybiya*. Bukhārī states in the Book of the Virtue of the Companions that Ibn 'Umar replied to this doubt by saying: "As for his flight on the day of Uhud, I testify that Allah has forgiven him and pardoned him. As for his absence from Badr, the daughter of the Messenger... was his wife and she was ill". The Prophet (*salahu alaihi wa sallam*) assigned him a portion of the booty from *Badr*, and hence he is considered as one of the people of *Badr* despite his absence.

Regarding the pledge of *Ridwān*, it was taken to avenge the blood of 'Uthmān, after a false rumour spread that the Quraysh had killed him. The pledge was done for 'Uthmān. The Prophet (*salahu alaihi wa sallam*) held out his right hand saying: This is the hand of 'Uthmān".

4) The claim that he beat Ibn Masūd until his ribs were broken is unsubstantiated. In fact in the dispute between Sa'd ibn Waqqās and Ibn Masūd, 'Uthmān judged in favour of the latter

5) The claim that he beat 'Ammār until his intestines were split open is again unsubstantiated. Ṭabarī narrates that a dispute occurred between 'Ammār and Abbās ibn Utba which led 'Uthmān to discipline both by beating them. Ibn al Arabi mentions that if his intestines had split open, he would never have lived.

6) 'Uthmān allegedly exiled Abū Dharr to Ar-Rababha. Abū Dharr was critical of the governors of 'Uthmān for, as he saw it, hoarding up gold and silver. However other companions including ibn 'Umar, 'Uthmān and Mu'āwiyah did not consider wealth on which zakāt had been paid as hoarded treasure. Abū Dharr requested that 'Uthmān send him to Ar-Rababha, a place three miles from Madina as the Prophet had commanded him to leave Madina when the built up area reached an area called *Sal*. 'Uthmān gave him permission and provided him with camels and slaves. Hence Abū Dharr was not exiled, but chose to leave Madina.

## **The planned assassination of 'Uthmān.**

Having failed to disparage 'Uthmān openly, the ring leaders of the sedition decided to use the following Hajj as an opportunity to depose 'Uthmān. In the month of Shawāl in 35AH about 3,000 followers of Ibn Saba simultaneously made their way to Madina from Basrah, Kūfa and Egypt. Many believed that 'Alī, Ṭalhā and Zubair were also calling for the overthrow of 'Uthmān. Pledges of allegiance were presented to the three aforementioned Companions in Madina, who flatly refused. 'Uthmān sent 'Alī to them to hear their complaints. One of their demands was the dismissal of Abdullah ibn Sa'd as the governor of Egypt and his replacement with Muḥammad ibn Abi Bakr. 'Uthmān agreed to this demand and the rebels left for their respective cities, taking different routes, satisfied with 'Uthmān.. However, according to Ṭabarī, Al-Ashtār and Hukaym bin Jabala stayed behind in Madina.

A few days later the rebels returned to Madina, simultaneously even though they had taken different routes back to Kūfa, Basrah and Egypt. They cordoned off the house of 'Uthmān and alleged that they had intercepted a letter from 'Uthmān to Abdullah bin Sa'd to kill them when they arrive back in Egypt. Al -'Arabi mentions that if the Egyptians had intercepted the letter and then subsequently made their way back to Madina to confront 'Uthmān, the fact that the Kufans and Basrans arrived back in Madina at the same time, even the three groups had been travelling in a totally different direction shows this had been pre-arranged. A forged letter had been sent to the Iraqis, on behalf of 'Alī, asking them to return. On their return to Madina, 'Alī refused to support him to which they retorted, 'then why did you write to us?'. 'Alī replied: 'by Allah, I did not write to you'. Hence both letters had been forged by the followers of Ibn Saba, who were intent on killing 'Uthmān. Many of the rebels were misled by the agitators. Also Ṭabarī states 'Uthmān would not have written to Abdullah in Sa'd in Egypt, because he had give Abdullah permission to come to Madina and he knew that he had left Egypt".

Although 'Uthmān took an oath that he had not written the letter, the rebels demanded that he abdicate but 'Uthmān refused. Suyuti states that the Prophet (salahu alaihi wa sallam) said: "Perhaps Allah will robe you in a garment, so if the hypocrites wish to strip it off you, do not take it off you until you meet me". A siege began of 'Uthmān's house, he was prevented from coming out of his house and eventually the water supply was cut off. A number of companions including Ḥasan, Hussayn, Muḥammad bin Ṭalhā, Abdullah ibn Zubayr (may Allah be

pleased with them) guarded the house and some of them were wounded in a fight with the rebels

'Uthmān requested that those who were defending him should leave, and rejected repeated offers of assistance from various companions (including Abū Hurayra and Zayd bin Thābbit). Uthman said: "I ask those who believe they owe me obedience to hold back their hands and their weapons... I have no need of any defence" He also said: The Prophet (*salahu alaihi wa sallam*) made a covenant with me and I will be patient with it. Ahmed narrates that during the siege 'Uthmān said: "I saw the Messenger of Allah, (*salahu alaihi wa sallam*) in a dream, and I saw Abū Bakr and 'Umar. They told me, 'Be patient, you will break fast with us tomorrow'. Then he called for a Qur'ān and he spread it open before him".

This refutes the claim that 'Uthmān was a weak leader. He was willing to endure this calamity which he knew would result in his death, preferring to sacrifice his own blood rather than spill the blood of his fellow Muslims. If he had wished, he could have escaped, or sent the *Ansar* and *Muhājarūn* against the rebels. But he preferred to be patient.

The rebels were concerned that the people would shortly be returning from Hajj, and apprehend them, so they decided to kill 'Uthmān. They entered his house from the back, after scaling the walls Muḥammad ibn Abi Bakr caught the beard of 'Uthmān and insulted him. 'Uthmān replied; 'if your father had been alive, he would have respected my age. At this, Muḥammad ibn Abi Bakr felt ashamed and left. Kinānah bin Bashr struck 'Uthmān with his sword. 'Uthmān's wife tried to stop the blow, and he cut off her fingers. At the time, 'Uthmān was reading the Qur'ān and his blood dropped on the verse: 'So Allah is sufficient for you against them'. 'Uthmān was martyred at the aged of 82 in the month of *Dhul Hijjah* in 35AH. He was buried three days after his martyrdom. May Allah have mercy upon his soul.

### **The consequences of Uthmān's martyrdom.**

The consequences were far reaching. Al -'Arabi, mentions that after the assassination, Madina was in the grip of the rebels with Ghāfiqī bin Ḥarḇ Akki in charge. They offered the Caliph to Ṭalhā and then Zubair, but both refused. Eventually the bayah was given to 'Alī. Ali was not in a position to hold the murderers of 'Uthmān to account, for in reality, they were in control. However many companions insisted that the blood of 'Uthmān be avenged before they gave 'Alī the bayah. When 'Alī moved to Iraq, 'Uthmān's murderers moved with him. They were responsible for the Battle of the Camel, after the 'Alī had reached a peace agreement with the camp of Aishah. Hence this bloody battle was a direct result of the assassination.

The death of 'Uthmān also lead to the battle of Siffin, resulting in the deaths of tens of thousands of Muslims. The subsequent arbitration between 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah led to 'Uthmān's murderers turning against 'Alī, and pronouncing him and Mu'āwiyah to be kuffar. Hence the first sect of Islam – the Khawarij emerged as a result of the killing of 'Uthmān.

Most of the Caliphate of 'Alī was taken up with the civil war that began due to the assassination of 'Uthmān. Hence another consequence of 'Uthmān's assassination was that the military conquests that were continuing unabated during the time of Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmān, almost grind to a halt during the Caliphate of 'Alī.



This article drew extensively from the following works:

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